PERFORMANCE, ICONOGRAPHY, RECEPTION

Studies in Honour of Oliver Taplin

Edited by MARTIN REVERMANN and
PETER WILSON

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Simon Goldhill is Professor of Greek at the University of Cambridge, and Fellow and Director of Studies in Classics at King's College. He has published very widely on all aspects of Greek literature and its reception. His most recent books are *Who Needs Greek?* (Cambridge, 2002), *The Temple of Jerusalem* (London, 2004), and *How to Stage Greek Tragedy Today* (Chicago and London, 2007).

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Edith Hall, after holding posts at the universities of Cambridge, Reading, Oxford, and Durham, took up a joint chair in Classics and Drama at Royal Holloway, University of London in 2006, where she is also Director of the Centre for the Reception of Greece and Rome. With Oliver Taplin she founded the Archive of Performances of Greek & Roman Drama at Oxford in 1996, and has collaborated with him closely on all its activities, including the editorial on two of the Archive's published books. She is also Chairman of the Gilbert Murray Trust. Her own books include *Inventing the Barbarian* (Oxford, 1989), *Greek Tragedy and the British Stage* (Oxford, 2005, with Fiona Macintosh), *The Theatrical Cast of Athens* (Oxford, 2006), and *The Return of Ulysses: A Cultural History of Homer's Odyssey* (London, 2008).

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P. Murray); and *Drama III: Studies in Honour of Kevin Lee* (London, 2006, with J. Davidson and F. Muecke).

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Introduction

This book is, above all, a gift for a man who has given us so much. On August 2nd 2008 Oliver Taplin will turn sixty-five. And soon after, he will retire from the University in which he has worked since 1968 and which he entered as an undergraduate as a Foundation Scholar of Corpus Christi College in 1962. We offer him this volume in celebration of more than four decades of achievement.

Scholar, tutor, advocate and disseminator of classical antiquity in the public domain: Oliver Taplin is a multi-faceted personality with a unique presence and exceptional charisma, an unmistakable voice that, for decades, has made itself heard—always clearly, fairly, and eloquently—in various walks of life. This is a gift from scholars to Taplin the scholar, though we hope that something of the charismatic personality that makes him so much more than a scholar is palpable throughout in this offering. Our first admission, then, must be one of inadequacy: no imaginable, and practicable, format could cover more than a fraction of his diverse work and manifold achievements. Our second is an apology: we could easily have filled three volumes this size with more willing contributors from all around the world, and to them we apologize.

But as well as being a tribute to this remarkable man this book will, it is hoped, also stand in its own right as a substantial and unified contribution to the field of Greek literature, in its broadest possible definition. And for that too we have Oliver to thank. For the structure and subject matter of the volume are modelled on the powerful thematic unity that characterizes the areas of research to which he has made such seminal contributions. Performance is the key term, and a connecting thread in all of Taplin's work—appropriately so, for the man rightly dubbed 'the father of performance studies in Classics'.

*

The Stagecraft of Aeschylus (1977) has proved the single most influential work of anglophone scholarship on Greek drama in the three decades since its appearance. It was followed soon after by *Greek Tragedy in Action* (1978), a book that was designed for, and that reached, an extremely wide audience.

It exemplified the principles of *Stagecraft* in a readily accessible form, and extended them to all three of the canonical classical tragedians. The effect was to free Greek tragedy from the strictures of the scholar's study and return it to the stage, and it was felt at all levels, from the most advanced level of academic research internationally to that of the generalist reader and school student. Perhaps most remarkable, given that *Stagecraft* is a specialized work of academic analysis, is that its impact was also felt on the public stage—quite literally, for the work directly informed the planning and design of a number of illustrious contemporary productions of Greek drama in the British theatre.

Taplin's simple but monumental insight—that classical tragedy and comedy as we now possess them are scripts designed for a very real live performance under the alien conditions of ancient Greek open-air, communal theatre—informs, in one way or another, all the contributions to this volume. And the articulation of the chapters reflects the way in which Taplin went on to develop the ideas and methodology that underpin *Stagecraft* for fruitful application to other absolutely central areas of Greek culture and its afterlife: Homeric epic, the iconography of the theatre, and the reception of Greek literature in subsequent eras.

Three Parts of the book (I. Performance: Explorations, III. Performance: Tragedy, and IV. Performance: Comedy) thus deal directly with Greek drama. The first of these is a series of explorations that cross a number of fields of Taplin's expertise. Here, the first three of the contributors explore the boundaries of dramatic genre, a subject to which Taplin has also made one of the most influential contributions. His 1986 article—'Fifth-Century Tragedy and Comedy: A *Synkrisis*'—presented the case, with characteristic verve and eloquence, for the generic definition of these two difficult siblings, tragedy and comedy, through mutual opposition. In our volume Foley, Ruffell, and Griffith continue the dialogue which that article initiated.

Taplin demonstrated the constructive strength of the generic differences between tragedy and comedy, the way that some of their most characteristic habits of performance distinguished one from the other: comedy, for instance, revelling in repeated and self-conscious reference to its own conventions and the mechanics of its performance; tragedy keeping itself at an aloof distance from such self-consciousness as to its status as a performance.

Foley closely examines the dynamics of cross-generic appropriation between tragedy and her ugly sibling. Generic self-assertion emerges as one pivotal, though far from exclusive, function of paratragedy within Aristophanic comedy, investing it with the artistically elevated and morally authoritative status of *trygedy* (a coinage the conceptual importance of which had already been highlighted by Taplin in a pithy and influential note

published in 1983). As for tragedy's appropriation of comedy—that is, for us, mainly the use of comic techniques such as distancing and metatheatrical awareness in late Euripides—Foley makes the case for regarding this important phenomenon not as something which undermines the tragic experience but, on the contrary, as something which preserves, protects, and defines it in a changing life environment characterized by arbitrariness and general loss of orientation.

Ruffell proposes to fine-tune the emphasis on polar oppositions so central to Taplin's argument, this time from the vantage point of how audiences process information in the context of the comic and tragic theatrical event respectively. Cognition and emotion, Ruffell argues, are not diametrically opposed, but are bound to occur in tandem, especially in comedy where jokes and laughter are crucial, and particularly foregrounded, elements of audience engagement.

Taking a generically broader and chronologically longer perspective, Griffith traces how and where the influential, basically bipolar conceptualization of classical drama—long seen as constituted completely and exclusively by the two forms of tragedy and comedy—breaks down or is simply inadequate to the richness of ancient dramatic culture. He looks both before and after the period of classical drama: to epic, for instance, with its strong strand of romance that fits neither the comic nor the tragic model, a strand that also figures prominently in the third and (until recently) neglected dramatic type of the satyr play. Griffith's wide-ranging study complicates the over-dichotomized approach to ancient drama and allows him to trace a 'middle' way, between the 'high' and 'low' of tragedy and comedy, that surfaces across all ages of the Greek theatrical tradition, and beyond.

Much of Taplin's research is characterized by an emphatically pragmatic and materialist quality: an interest in the fabric of costume, mask, and stage; how performance works in practice; how empty space and ordinary physical objects are transformed by comic genius and tragic eloquence. This solidly materialist strand has influenced Wilson's earlier work on the economics of the Greek theatre, on where the money came from to buy the costumes and pay the players. Here he continues that work by attempting for the first time to 'cost' a major Athenian theatrical festival in its entirety. The results substantiate the claims made in some ancient sources that the Athenians devoted vast resources to their theatre, though not the generally negative assessment that comes with those claims, to the effect that this was money that could have been better spent elsewhere.

The last of these 'explorations' follows Taplin's move away from Athens, the self-styled metropolis of drama, west to the Greek cities of Sicily and South Italy. In 1999 Taplin was one of a small group of scholars paying serious

attention to the performance of tragedy outside Athens and Attica: He not only showed that tragedy was exported from Athens much earlier and to more places than had hitherto been supposed; he also made the case that Athens 'spread the word' through performance—that is, that the export of tragedy was part of a cultural politics and helped transmit Athenian social and political values across the Hellenized (and Hellenizing) world. This has proven another very rich seam in Taplin's research, and the fresh eyes he brought to the subject, combined with new archaeological discoveries, continue to make it a very exciting area. In the context of his own work, this study of drama outside Athens forms a logical bridge to the major field of research which his two most recent books have opened up: the extent to which vase paintings, themselves one of Athens' most successful exports, reflect an interest in, as well as active exportation and subsequent local adaptation of, Athenian theatre. The comic material was treated in the influential *Comic Angels and Other Approaches to Greek Tragedy Through Vase-Paintings* (1993); the tragic in *Pots and Plays: Interactions between Tragedy and Greek Vase-Paintings of the Fourth Century* (2007), which has just been published as we write.

Kowalzig lends the eye of an historian of religion to the ensemble of evidence—literary, iconographic and archaeological—for the performance of drama in the Greek west, especially in the great city states of Sicily. Here Demeter and her daughter seem to have been the more usual recipients and patrons of drama, and Kowalzig tries to identify the factors—political, religious, and economic—that may lie behind this.

*

Taplin is one of the very few scholars indeed who have made major contributions to the two areas of Greek literature most thoroughly traversed by centuries of classical scholarship: tragedy and Homeric epic. One of the most intriguing challenges of his stimulating and incisive book on Homer's *Iliad*—*Homeric Soundings: The Shaping of the Iliad* (1992)—is its call to consider afresh the performability of that vast epic, and the practical conditions under which it may in fact have been performed.

In 'II. Performance: Epic' Kelly and Murray continue this debate in complementary discussions that focus on the *Odyssey* rather than the *Iliad*. Murray takes up for that epic the very question Taplin had posed for the *Iliad*: what, on the available evidence, are the conditions of its performance? Taplin envisaged the *Iliad* at a large, inter-regional Panhellenic festival, spread over some three consecutive days of more or less continuous performance. Murray by contrast makes the case for the *Odyssey* as an epic designed for the entirely new and extremely intimate performance venue of the orientalizing

symposium, and he proposes that the whole poem may have served as the entertainment for some forty such consecutive occasions. As so often in Greek culture, changes in performance practice mirror, and sometimes mould, changing historical, social, cultural, and political structures.

Kelly is concerned rather with the representation of poetic performance within the heroic world of the epic, a subject on which Taplin has written eloquently in his contribution to his own edited *Literature in the Greek and Roman Worlds: A New Perspective* (2000) ('The Springs of the Muses: Homer and Related Poetry'). Kelly brings into sharp relief a paradox at the heart of the depiction of Odysseus in the epic. The hero is famously presented with the characteristics of a singer, himself apparently master of the narrative for a number of books that recount his travels from Troy; and yet this image is set at risk by the way that, in the second half of the poem, the tales this Odysseus-bard tells are all demonstrably false. Kelly suggests that a 'Hesiodic' paradigm comes competitively into play in this latter phase, and helps to resolve the apparent paradox. For, according to the Hesiodic model of poetic authority, personal experience and character are valued as authenticating rather than seen as undermining. This is in opposition to the more distanced method of Homeric bards, and of Homer himself, who systematically edit themselves out of the poetic process. Kelly may have unearthed the submerged traces of an antagonism in epic poetics that reflects genuine differences of performance style among those earliest of all Greek performers.

Finally, Allan looks at the opening of the *Iliad* performance and argues that the point of the 'will of Zeus', debated since antiquity, is threefold: to underline the authority of the bard who, through the Muses, has access to Zeus' all-comprehensive schemes; to embed the Iliadic narrative within the whole pool of heroic storytelling; and, in theological terms, to assert and substantiate Zeus' superior power.

*

The tragedies of Aeschylus were the rich terrain upon which Taplin launched the performance studies 'revolution' in Classics in 1977, and he has returned to the poet on several occasions since. Note, for instance, his characteristically open-minded reappraisal of his earlier views on tragic metatheatre in the 1993 article on the 'aetiology' of tragedy in the *Oresteia*, and the illuminating perspective he has recently opened on the *Persians* as a composition that stakes the claims for tragedy in an implicit contest among genres for the title of the premier celebratory form for Greek military victory over the Persians in the 470s (the topic of generic mapping and self-definition is a key theme of Taplin's thinking on drama). But it has been equally important for Taplin to take his Aeschylean expertise into a wider world: hence, for instance, the

introduction to a new Japanese translation published in Tokyo in 1990, programme notes for a number of contemporary performances and adaptations, and above all the advice he has given some of the most celebrated poets, performers, and directors of the day. A dog-eared copy of *Stagecraft* was knocking around the floor of the rehearsal room for Peter Hall's celebrated and influential production of the *Oresteia* at the National Theatre in 1981!

In 'III. Performance: Tragedy' Easterling and Revermann enter into dialogue with Taplin's seminal work on Aeschylus, while Csapo, Kavoulaki, and Zeitlin focus their attention on Euripides. Easterling combines close study of poetic language with a consideration of performance issues (a combination all too rare) in an analysis of how the Furies are presented in the *Oresteia*. The fruitful upshot of this combined approach is to advance our understanding of a central interpretative issue in the final play of the trilogy: do the Furies really *change*? Sensitivity to the performative dimension of the question allows us to see, for instance, how hints of the power and youthfulness of the young men dancing under the dark robes of the aged female Furies in the *Eumenides*—all the more apparent in performance—will have reinforced the claims made in the linguistic register that these are, paradoxically, youthful deities, in addition to being primordially ancient ones.

Revermann studies the *Eumenides* as a test case for the cultural poetics of time and space. The play lends itself to this type of inquiry particularly well, because in this respect (as in others) it is significantly unlike all other preserved tragedy. A detailed analysis of how spatio-temporal categories are deployed (including in the presentation of the choral persona) suggests that the play consistently embeds the action within the past and the future, and achieves this by juxtaposing different conceptualizations of time and space. Such use of 'composite time' and 'composite space' results in a 'composite reality' which invests the play with a special ontological status. The vision of Athens as a functional democracy therefore becomes 'transtemporal' in that it is something which is, has been, and will be. Such use of chronotopes (= the relationship between time and space) is unique in preserved drama, and, Revermann argues, closely connected to the play's functioning as a sustained aetiology. The 'aetiological mode' is used to magnify and authenticate the play's vision. Finally, the question 'why aetiology?' is confronted, and the dramatic 'aetiological mode' is contrasted with the non-dramatic one.

In his contribution Csapo examines the images of the 'chorus of stars', which is particularly prominent in late, especially late Euripidean, tragedy. Building on his earlier work which argued that there is a late fifth-century Dionysian revival which crucially informs, among other phenomena, New Music and through it tragic song (both choral and monodic), Csapo analyses in detail the occurrences of 'star choruses' in tragedy as well as the

roots of 'cosmic dance' in Pythagorean and Orphic thought. The paper is part of a fundamental reassessment of cultural and religious politics in late fifth-century Athens: contrary to received opinion the late Euripides emerges not as the radically questioning sophist but as a prime exponent of a movement which seeks to restore the primordial Dionysian element, in both formal and material terms, to the performative arts.

Kavoulaki examines how a play which is normally considered to be particularly Athenian, Euripides' *Hiketides*, becomes universalist through the use of ritual frames. Focusing especially on the chorus, Kavoulaki demonstrates how ritual, both invoked and enacted, moves the play synchronically beyond its immediate Athenian context and diachronically into the present of the audience. It is above all the unified closural processional movement which articulates a beneficial and potentially transformative experience for the participating community, a phenomenon similar to, yet interestingly different from, the closure of the *Oresteia*.

The important, but comparatively neglected, topic of children in Euripidean drama is taken up in Zeitlin's contribution. She persuasively demonstrates that the onstage presence of children is motivated by far more intricate dynamics than a sheer increase of pathos. In particular, children often serve as foils which throw into relief the complexities, and contradictions, of their parents. This becomes especially transparent in the figures of Creusa, Hecuba, and Medea who embody the ambivalence associated in the Greek cultural imaginary with women in general: here one and the same female is both beneficially nurturant and perilously destructive, a paradox which underlies many representations of women in tragedy. Zeitlin, however, resists tendencies to establish a linear connection between the increasing prominence of children on the Attic stage and the dire realities of war-torn Athens towards the end of the fifth century. Instead, she draws attention to how emotionality itself becomes a more and more valid, and powerful, means of dramatic expression.

Finally, in his paper on characterization in tragedy Seidensticker reminds us that the formal features and conventions of this highly stylized art form—many of them thoroughly performative in nature—are far from being at odds with the possibility of nuanced individualized characterization and the enactment of interiority.

*

From the very start, comedy exerted a profound influence on Taplin's thinking about tragedy, even if the influence may be less obvious initially and is often one of polar opposition. Fundamental observations on comedy are woven into the fabric of the *Stagecraft* book of 1977. Taplin's second article,

a meticulous and groundbreaking analysis of silence in tragedy and its particular association with Aeschylus, takes as its starting point Aristophanes' lampooning of Aeschylean *gravitas* in *Frogs*. The above-mentioned note on *trygedy* (1983) has far-reaching implications for the self-conceptualization of (Aristophanic) comedy, and in some important ways paves the way for the landmark macroscopic comparison of tragedy and comedy (published in 1986) which, as we noted earlier, continues to stimulate fruitful debate, not least in the present volume, more than twenty years on.

The most clearly flagged connections with comedy, however, were established via a (then) unconventional route, which is part of the reason why this specific area of Taplin's *oeuvre* is one of particularly innovative thinking. Iconography, of minor importance in Taplin's earlier work, caught his sustained attention in the mid-80s when he and Eric Csapo were the first to connect a freshly published South Italian vase from the early fourth century, the 'Würzburg Telephus', with a specific scene from Attic comedy, Aristophanes' *Women at the Thesmophoria*, which was first performed in Athens in 411. This crucial piece of new evidence gave a different level of credence and material underpinning to a thesis advanced by T.B.L. Webster in 1948 which postulated that at least some theatre iconography produced in South Italy was not inspired by local tradition but, indeed, by Attic drama. With this new key domino in play, Taplin redefined the game board, combining the 'literary' and the 'contextual' perspective. Not only does *Comic Angels* (1993) show the honorand's characteristically keen eye for detail and articulate fairness in presenting and weighing evidence. More than that, the monograph has reshaped scholars' perception not just of comedy but of Attic drama in general. How and why did drama travel? How are meanings affected by recontextualization? How Athenian and how Panhellenic is this mobile art form? How do iconography and performance interact, and are there genre-specific dynamics? How do comic and tragic iconography relate to each other? Last but certainly not least, *Comic Angels* bears the true hallmark of a groundbreaking work in that it initiates a paradigm change by posing more questions—and fascinating ones at that—than it answers. The contributions on comedy in the present volume pick up on Taplin's interests from two angles. Brown's detailed analysis of doorkeeper scenes in Aristophanes is a classic instantiation of methods prevalent in Taplin's early work, while iconography and its contribution towards reconstructing the visual dimension of comedy loom large in Wiles's wide-ranging observations on masks in Old Comedy.

But all the authors in the subsequent section 'V. Performance: Iconography' also engage with Taplin's work in the area, notably tragedy-related iconography which is the focus of Taplin's most recent monograph *Pots and Plays* (2007).

Osborne approaches theatre iconography from the perspective of the historian of material culture, engaging in a refreshing and stimulating way with questions that are of central importance to *Pots and Plays*. Rather than, as is usually done, comparing theatre-related pots with each other, Osborne shifts the focus by situating these paintings within individual painters' whole repertories of iconographic choices. This change of perspective enables him to look at familiar questions from novel angles. Thus the near absence of dramatic scenes on Athenian red-figure pots is explained as a deliberate choice of painters (and, ultimately, viewers) to keep the field of reference imaginatively fluid rather than historically manifest. Art is 'good to think with', and is used as a vehicle for offering paradigms (often in the form of fantastic displacements). Similarly, the presence of theatre-related iconography on South Italian and Sicilian pots is the product of deliberate choice by some local schools at different times, motivated by the desire to challenge and engage the viewer who is now forced to create contexts of interpretation.

Moreno introduces a body of material and visual evidence for theatrical culture that is almost entirely unknown outside specialist circles: gems and finger rings used as seals that bear imagery of theatrical inspiration. These relatively cheap and plentiful objects provide a sizeable body of evidence for the way in which artists other than vase painters responded to their society's experience of and persistent interest in theatre. Moreno builds on Taplin's central insight that dramatic artists were fundamentally visual artists, to ask whether these gems and finger rings have a similar relationship to drama as that which Taplin has demonstrated for vases. One of the intriguing characteristics of this evidence highlighted by Moreno is its affinity, through function, with a key theme of drama, that of recognition.

In his contribution Lissarrague picks up on Taplin's attentiveness to the visual markers or 'signals' in vase imagery through which the painter is interacting with another visual artist, the poet. Like Taplin, Lissarrague rejects the notion that the iconographic register is simply an illustration of the theatrical, but neither does he insist on its complete autonomy from other artistic media. In a close examination of several vases, Lissarrague suggests ways in which we may expand the repertory of these signals of iconographic interaction, looking for instance at the deployment of masks and mirrors.

*

'Each age can turn to it [i.e. Ancient Greece] to reflect its own priorities, its own preoccupations, and find guidance in the particular things that they are searching for enlightenment in. What we have, then, is not one huge monument that always looks the same wherever you look at it from and from

whatever time you look at it, but something shifting . . . Each age will perceive it differently, each age will derive different things from it.'

When Taplin said this in an interview during the first sequence of the TV series 'Greek Fire' (aired in Britain in 1990, and subsequently in a number of other countries), a series for which he was acting as the principal consultant, reception studies in Classics was not the enormous industry that it has turned into by the beginning of the twenty-first century. The cultural relevance of ancient Greece, and of ancient culture in general, has been of never-ceasing interest and concern to Taplin (not least reflected in his lifelong affection for, and profound knowledge of, the modern country, its people, and their language). That and how Greece matters is a persistent theme especially in his non-academic writings (a very important part of his work which, as mentioned above, is not represented in the present volume).

Taplin is, without question, one of the scholars who have been thinking not just longest but also hardest about issues to do with reception. And because of his energetic and committed policy of 'outreach'—be it with schools, theatre practitioners, or on TV—he, of all people, has arguably invested most into the cause as an individual. The depth and scope of this engagement with the question of relevance is reflected in the quality of Taplin's published academic work in this area. He has, in fact, been a leading pioneer in this growth area of classical studies that crosses numerous borders of time and discipline, expands the traditional boundaries of the subject and, very often, is especially sensitive to the active role played by classical drama at critical moments in the wider political and cultural stories of particularly significant periods and places in the modern, pre- and postmodern worlds. He was a central figure in the introduction of the field to the undergraduate syllabus at the University of Oxford, through the creation of a joint degree in Classics and English which has since become acknowledged as the best-integrated course of its kind in the world. In 1996 he also became the joint founder and co-director, with Edith Hall, of the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama (the APGRD) at the University of Oxford. This highly successful and productive research enterprise—truly cosmopolitan and interdisciplinary in outlook—has in its relatively short life generated an impressive number of volumes of research and organized numerous conferences, lectures, and other events, as well as amassing the most important collection of evidence relating to the reperformance of classical drama since the Renaissance. In addition to which we should note his role as joint founder of the European Network for the Research and Documentation of Ancient Greek Drama; his various translations and adaptations of classical literature for publication and performance; collaborations with major contemporary poets and other artists working

within—and sometimes against—the (broadly conceived) classical tradition; and, most recently, his role in bringing leading international performance artists to the University of Oxford through the Onassis Programme for the Performance of Greek Drama.

Goldhill, the first contributor in the final part of the volume: 'VI. Performance: Reception', treats an extremely difficult chapter in the history of the modern uses of Hellenism: the hitherto largely ignored connection between Richard Wagner's anti-Semitism and his famous, obsessive, Hellenism, focused as it was so intently on Aeschylean tragedy. Built around a close performance analysis of two productions of the *Ring* in Bayreuth—the first under the direction of Richard Wagner in 1876, the second by his grandson Wieland in 1951—Goldhill shows how the change of performance styles masks a chilling attempt to depoliticize and denazify Bayreuth by 'Hellenizing' the later production, involving in the process the authority of one of Germany's leading academic Hellenists in support. But he also shows that one reason the anti-Semitism of Wagner senior has been masked in the reception of his *Ring* is the fact of the original production's lack of overt association with Hellenism. Yet that Hellenism was central to his theatrical ideals, as it was also integral to his trenchant nationalism.

The appropriation of Greek theatre by the Nazis is the topic of Erika Fischer-Lichte's contribution. Her analysis focuses on Lothar Müthel's production of the *Oresteia* at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin. Not only does she demonstrate how this production could be taken to mirror the Nazis' perception of Germany rising from the defeat of World War I through the 'humiliation' of the Versailles Treaty and the failed Weimar Republic to the 'redemption' by the National Socialist movement. More than that, Fischer-Lichte breaks new ground by exploring the neglected link between Greek drama and the so-called *Thingspiel* movement which, in venues that deliberately echoed Greek theatre architecture, dramatized events of (mostly) recent German history on a monumental scale (often with hundreds, even thousands, of performers).

Honouring Taplin's considerable record of achievement in the area, the section, and the volume, is concluded by contributions from two of Taplin's closest collaborators at the APGRD, Edith Hall and Fiona Macintosh. Hall concentrates on an intriguing facet of the rich cultural history of the *Odyssey*: its appropriations in dramatic format, notably tragedy (a topic which chimes excellently with a current project of Taplin's, a dramatic rendering of the *Iliad* in the format of a trilogy). Starting with the sombre reading of the *Odyssey* by Horkheimer and Adorno in the apocalyptic final years of World War II, Hall embarks on a journey spanning twenty-five centuries, from Aeschylus to Walcott and Mnouchkine. She discusses the inherent theatricality of the

epic (particularly manifest in the figures of the protagonist, Proteus, and, not least, Athena) and explores the appropriation of *Odyssey* material, and the presentation of its (non-Athenian) hero as the archetypal survivor, in the three dramatic genres of fifth-century Athens and (far) beyond. Hall continually stresses the inherently untragic nature of the hero who invariably prevails and does not kill kin. Darker readings of this success story are the preserve of modernity (especially under Freudian influence) and require radical changes to the epic and the psyche of its hero.

Macintosh examines a topic of particular significance for Taplin's current work, that of translation. By carefully tracing and contextualizing the genesis and stage (or screen) history of Yeats's translation of Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* Macintosh leads us right into core of this play's fascinating history of performance reception in the twentieth century. Yeats's *Oedipus*, she argues, is a prime catalyst for the creation of the Modernist *Oedipus*, conceptualized either along the lines of Freudianism or those of the Cambridge ritualists. That said, the translation outlasts these Modernist appropriations because of its universalist features (notably the suppression of a Theban context) and the sheer craftsmanship and spellbinding power of its minimalist approach to rendering Sophoclean language.

Macintosh's profound and far-reaching observations on the continued inspirational power of Sophoclean drama provide a fitting closure to this volume, looking both into the past and into the future of the honorand's work. Sophocles was the subject of Taplin's first article in 1971 (on the *Philoctetes*, a play he has always particularly valued). This playwright has also been a preferred lecture topic throughout the honorand's long and highly successful teaching career. And currently he is preparing a translation of all Sophoclean plays for the *Oxford World's Classics* series. This translation, to be sure, will be everything that has characterized the honorand's voice for all these years: empathetic, deep, creative, eloquent, and distinct.

Part I

Performance: Explorations

11

Star Choruses: Eleusis, Orphism, and New Musical Imagery and Dance*

Eric Csapo

A dozen years have passed since Albert Henrichs gave a full description of a remarkable change in the imagery of tragic choral odes. Henrichs found a large increase in choral self-reference (i.e. choruses talking about their own performance) in the last decades of the fifth century, and especially in the late plays of Euripides. Henrichs fortunately did not limit his study to self-reference: late choruses also speak much more of other choruses dancing (a phenomenon he termed 'choral projection'.) The fact is that late and especially late Euripidean choruses describe music and dance (whether their own or that of others) surprisingly often, and, when they do, this music or dance has a distinctly, usually expressly, Dionysiac quality, or if not Dionysiac, at least cultic. With the observation that choral lyric reveals (one might say 'conspicuously advertises') a conscious connection with Dionysiac ritual, Henrichs put a rather strong case for Euripides' religious commitment: 'Far from suppressing Dionysus, as Nietzsche claimed, Euripides takes advantage of every conceivable dimension of the god and deserves to rank as the most Dionysiac of the three tragedians.'[1]

A new Euripides emerges from this observation, one opposed to the more traditional (comedogenic) portrait of Euripides *theomakhos*, the sceptical if not atheistic child of the sophists (the *Bacchae* was sometimes described as a deathbed conversion, or a last cynical Pascal's wager). But the phenomenon described by Henrichs goes beyond choral song and beyond Euripides. Henrichs' arguments were confined to choral odes. Yet Euripidean monody also has a penchant for Dionysiac and cultic musical imagery (though in monody it is not a question of 'self-reflexivity', since Dionysian cultic dance

* My thanks to Atticus Cox and Peter Wilson for many helpful suggestions in developing the argument of this paper and to Robert Fowler for sharing his unpublished research.

[1] Henrichs (1994–5), quotation p. 57.

and music is by nature choral). Indeed musical projection of this sort goes beyond Euripides and beyond tragedy. It is highly characteristic of dithyramb from at least the time of Pindar and of the (largely dithyramb-inspired) 'New Music' (including nomes and other monodic performances).[2] The efflorescence of Dionysian and cultic imagery in later fifth-century musical verse seems to me to indicate that New Musicians (including Euripides), despite a notoriety for innovation, conceived of their activity as an essentially conservative enterprise, namely the 'recreation' of an authentically Dionysian music. This is also an unorthodox claim. Like Euripides, New Music (sometimes more narrowly 'New Dithyramb') has, from Plato to Zimmermann, been characterized, and condemned, as the product of the fifth-century decline in religious faith, the growth of secularization, and an artistic surrender to empty aestheticism.[3]

In this essay I expand upon my earlier claim that a religious and particularly Dionysian revival played a large role in shaping the character of New Music and in shaping, through the New Music, much of the imagery we find in late fifth-century tragic odes. In earlier studies of New Music I argued that New Music responded in part to the general expansion of Dionysian cultic activity in Athens (and elsewhere) both through the reception in Central Greece of Bacchic/Orphic mysteries, and through the absorption of the ideas and imagery of such cults by the Eleusinian mysteries (and particularly through Eleusis' absorption of ideas and images related to Dionysiac music and dance). In this tribute to Oliver Taplin, the fount and origin of performance studies in Greek drama, I hope to explore some of these broad, essentially 'performative' connections, but within the compass of a much more narrowly focused study of one recurrent pattern of projection in tragic choral odes, the chorus of stars.

By late antiquity the image of the 'chorus of stars' had an unmistakable connection with mystery cult. Artemidorus adduces a 'chorus of stars' as a dream image thought particularly auspicious to 'those who practice more mystery-like devotions', presumably because of an acknowledged cultural connection between image and activity (1.3 *γίνεται . . . τοῖς πάνυ τὰ μυστικώτερα πράττουσιν . . . εὔσημος ἀστέρων χορός*). Flavius Philostratus refers to the chorus of stars as 'the mysteries above the earth' (*ep.* 56). Dio draws a strict analogy between the dance of initiates 'in a circle' around the initiand at Eleusis and the chorus of immortal gods who perpetually dance around us in the form of stars (*Or.* 12.33–5).[4] But the overall pattern of the image's use

[2] Csapo (1999–2000), (2003), (2004).
[3] See Csapo (1999–2000), 415, Csapo and Wilson (forthcoming).
[4] See esp. Hardie (2004), 22–5.

would suggest that it had a mystical aura from the beginning. The citations, like the stars, come in clusters.[5] If one follows the image through Archaic to Late Antique Greek literature then the densest cluster is, in prose, the tradition of Pythagorean/Platonic cosmology,[6] and, in poetry, cultic hymns, and, for the most part, hymns connected to Dionysus, Eleusis, or mystery cult.[7] But if one confines the search to the fifth century or even the Classical period, then by far the densest use of the image of star choruses is in the imagery of tragic choral odes.[8] Tragic odes may seem at first an odd addition to the set, especially given the well-established (if not yet fully understood) connections between Pythagorean and Platonic cosmology, on the one hand, and Bacchic (or Orphic) and Eleusinian doctrine, on the other. But we will see that the tragic odes fully fit the mystical stamp of their congeners.

1. PYTHAGOREANS, ORPHICS, AND COSMIC DANCE

The roots of 'music cosmology' run deep in Greek thought.[9] The concept of cosmic dance first survives in Pythagorean texts.[10] Petron used the metaphor of dance for the movement of the 183 worlds he ascribed to the universe (DK 16 A1). Philolaus spoke of the dance of the fixed stars, planets, sun, moon, earth, and counter-earth dancing around the 'Hearth of the Universe' which

[5] In addition to the passages in the following notes, other literary uses of the image include: Argentarius *AP* 9.270.1; Anon. *AP* 9.504; Luc. *Deor.Conc.* 5; Eustath. *Hysmine and Hysminias* 5.160. Cf. Tib. 2.1.88, Pro. 3.4.36; Hor. *Carm.* 4.14.21; Manil. 2.118, St. *Ach.* 1.643; Hyg. *Fab.* 192.6; Censorinus c. 13. For astrological dances generally see Sachs (1937), 124–31; Miller (1986).

[6] Philolaus DK 44 A16; Pl. *Tim.* 40c, *Epin.* 982e; Arist. fr. 11 Rose, *De philosophia* fr. 12b Ross; Dio Orat. 12.33–4; Philostratus *ep.* 56 etc. (the image is used some twenty-two times in Philo and is ubiquitous in Christian treatises (esp. John Chrysostom) where the patterned order of the chorus of stars is as in Plato and Aristotle generally invoked as proof of the existence of a demiurge).

[7] *FGrH* 76 F 13 (ithyphallic hymn to Demetrius); Philodamus of Scarphea, *Delphic Paean to Dionysus* 8 πάντες δ [ἀστέρες ἀγχ]όρευσαν (a less likely supplement by Weil (1895), 402); Mesomedes, *Hymn to the Sun* 17–18, *Hymn to Isis* 19, *Hymn to Hadrian* 10; Aelius Aristides, *Hymn to Zeus* 6 (vol. 1.7 Jebb); Heitsch (1963) fr. 10.6 (to Selene), fr. 14.15 (to Aphrodite). Cf. Nonnus 1.237, 2.228, 2.352, 9.238, 21.252, 25.241, 25.338, 25.449, 27.50, 32.7, 35.337, 38.311; Menander Rhet. *Peri epideiktikon* 446.2 (Russell and Wilson); *Corpus Hermeticum* 1.8.6, 2.13.3, 6.14.1, and the Christian hymnic tradition represented by Synesius, *Hymn* 5; Michael Psellus *Poem.* 17.6, 63.6, *In Mariam Sclerenam* 6; Manuel Philes, *Carm.* 3.14.290.

[8] S. *Ant.* 1146–53; E. *El.* 365–7, *Ion* 1074–86, *Phaethon* 66; Critias *TrGF* 43 F 4; *TrGF* Adesp. 89a.

[9] Franklin (2006*a*).

[10] See Miller (1986), 45–55, It is clearly also known to Ionian cosmology: Diogenes, for example, wrote of currents of air providing the *chorègia* that causes the heavenly bodies to revolve (fr. DK 64 A17).

he also referred to as an 'altar' (DK 44 A16). Aristotle affirms that the Pythagoreans of Italy believed in a central fire around which the earth and stars revolved (*Cael.* 293ᵃ20–8). The dance of the stars was very early conceived as a cultic performance.

The fullest account of cosmic music (the harmony of the spheres) and cosmic 'dance' appears in Plato. It is placed in the mouth of the Pythagorean Timaeus in Plato's *Timaeus* where the demiurge is said to have made two circles, one outer circle of stars moving in perfect synchrony, and an inner circle of the planets, sun, and moon, less perfect and moving at different rates. Their movements constituted a 'choral dance' (χορεία) around a central earth. The *Republic* offers an analogous, but in detail quite different, picture: the centre of the cosmos is described as a great shaft of light (φῶς) stretching through the earth and the sky called the 'spindle of Necessity' (616b). Around this spindle revolve eight concentric whorls which are turned by the Fates. The whole spindle moves in one direction (617a). The outermost whorl (containing the stars) Clotho turns with her right hand in the same direction as the spindle (617c). The inner seven whorls (the five visible planets, sun and moon) Atropos moves with her left hand slowly and at various speeds in the opposite direction, so that, even though, relative to the stationary observer, all the whorls move in the same direction as the spindle, the inner whorls move in the opposite direction relative to the spindle and outer whorl (617a-d). The choral nature of these revolutions is marked by the presence of a siren sitting on each of the whorls and singing a different note, together forming an eight-part harmony.

The fully orchestrated cosmos has an eschatological side that is most fully explored in *Timaeus* and *Phaedrus*. In *Timaeus* Plato speaks of the demiurge's creation of soul substance out of proportions that correspond to the intervals of an octave, a material embodiment of musical *harmonia*. Out of this soul substance he created the other gods who are the stars and planets. Their movements in heaven are a visual analogue of soul substance's harmony. Particular gods used less perfect 'soul stuff' to create humans. Because of their more complex motions, humans risked falling out of step with original harmony but they were given ears and eyes to hear music and contemplate the cosmic dance, and a sense of rhythm to imitate it in human dance. It is by imitating the dance of the stars that we retune our souls, and it is by keeping our souls in good tone that we retain a hope that the divine substance within us will one day reconnect with the divine substance in heaven. In *Phaedrus* we catch a glimpse of the human soul that after leaving the body tries to regain the heights and rhythms of the cosmic dance. Each soul is said to follow after its own particular god as he circles the heavens. 'Hestia alone remains in the dwelling of the gods' while the other gods, referred to as a 'divine chorus', and

'choreuts', fly up on feast days on their chariots to the apex of the vault of heaven. Here, they are carried about by its revolutions, as they gaze, like tourists in a revolving restaurant, into the outer cosmos at mystic visions of absolute Justice, Virtue, and Knowledge, a mystic revelation which conveys to each soul its immortality, its communion with divinity, and the laws governing its own destiny.[11] In this mystic vision Plato manages a perfect harmony of his own, uniting Pythagorean music, mathematics, and astronomy with mystic eschatology.[12]

We cannot unfortunately say just how much of this vision belongs to Plato. The idea that the stars perform a circular dance, and a cultic dance around an altar, is, as we have seen, much older. The doctrine that linked the music of the spheres, the tuning of the lyre, and the eschatologically healthy human soul had enormous appeal for later Orphics, who found its early expression in Orpheus' attempt to resurrect Eurydice with the power of the lyre.[13] We can at least trace the concept of a 'cosmic lyre' to Skythinos in the fifth century.[14] Moreover, Aristotle associates the linkage between the harmony of the lyre and the harmony of the stars/planets with Pythagorean, not Platonic thought (the Pythagoreans are said to take the seven notes of the scale, the seven-stringed lyre, the seven planets of the cosmos, and the seven Pleiades as all manifestations of the same numerical cosmic principle).[15] Indeed John Franklin has recently shown that the connection between the strings of the lyre, the planets or stars, and universal harmony is deeply rooted in Greek and Middle Eastern thought.[16]

To anticipate a minor theme in this paper, I would dwell for a moment on the presence of the Pleiades in Aristotle's list of cosmic coordinates. The mythological concept of the Pleiades as a chorus of dancers is widespread.[17] So is their connection with cosmic order: in Babylonian mythology the seven gods are identified with the Pleiades.[18] The Pythagoreans called the Pleiades the 'Lyre of the Muse', likening its seven stars to strings.[19] In Greece the Pleaides were (usually) seven catasterized maidens, almost invariably linked with choral dance and even coming to be regarded as the inventors of choral dance.[20] It may well be by chance that the very first reference in Greek literature to a chorus of stars is to the Pleiades. But it is possible that the chorus of Alcman's *Parthenion* evokes its 'rivals' the Pleiades as the mythical dancers

[11] Pl. *Phdr.* 247a–e. On the choral terminology, see D'Alfonso (1994), 26–7.

[12] For the mainly Pythagorean musical and mathematical background to Plato's account, see most recently Barker (2005), 131–41. For the mystic language, see esp. Riedweg (1987), 30–69.

[13] For the later Orphic 'cosmic lyre' see West (1983), 29–32.

[14] Skythinos *IEG* fr. 1; West (1983), 29–32; Hardie (2004), 28; Wilson (2004), 289.

[15] Arist. *Met.* 1093*a*. [16] Franklin (2006*a*), (2006*b*). [17] Gibbon (1972), 241–44.

[18] Franklin (2006*a*), 380 n. 12. [19] DK 58 C2, cf. B27.

[20] Scholiast to Theocritus 13.25 (cf. Callim. fr. 693 Pfeiffer; Hygin. *Astr.* 2.21).

par excellence, to which the mortal chorus of maidens can only compare itself unfavourably, just as the chorus later compares itself, unfavourably, to the archetypal mythical singers, the Sirens.[21]

2. *ANTIGONE*, *ION*, AND OTHER ELEUSINIAN STARS

The chorus of Sophocles' *Antigone* invokes Dionysus as 'the chorus leader of fire-breathing stars and overseer of nocturnal utterances'; it invites him to come 'along with your revolving Thyiads (*σαῖς ἅμα περιπόλοις θυίαισιν*), who dance for you, Iacchus, their master, all night long' (1146–53). There is little implicit connection between the performers and the dancers they invoke, whether in character (the performers are sober old men) on occasion (in council at midday). The point of comparison is sooner between the two embedded choruses both led by Dionysus: the Thyiads with their pine torches resemble the 'fire-breathing stars,' and like them 'revolve . . . all night long' with a circular movement. The word 'revolving' is the *vox propria* for the revolution of heavenly bodies.[22] The chorus of stars authenticate the Thyiads, not *Antigone*'s chorus. Or, rather, both the choruses of Thyiads and stars are there to evoke the image of an authentic and original cultic performance, even at the cost of conflating Delphic cult (Thyiads) with Eleusinian (to which the address to Dionysus as 'Iacchus' unambiguously refers).[23] The fire against the night sky when linked to Thyiads suggests the Dionysian rite of *oreibasia*, but when linked to Iacchus it alludes to the Iacchus procession from Athens to Eleusis that began the celebration of the Greater Mysteries on the 20th of Boedromion. The procession was led by an Eleusinian official called the Dadouchos ('Torchbearer') and ended with an all-night reception for Iacchus, which Attic art, in Robert Parker's words, semaphores with 'torches, torches, nothing but torches'.[24] In literature Iacchus is frequently identified (or confused) with Dionysus, a fact that Parker attributes to the excitement, exhilaration, and rejuvenating qualities it ascribes to the procession.[25] But as Sophocles' words suggest, the Dionysiac quality of the Iacchus procession is

[21] Atticus Cox draws my attention to evidence for a cultic *parthenion* with astrological symbolism in Proclus, *Chrestomath.* 74–8 Severyns. For the suggestion that Alcman, *Parth.* 1 plays upon the Pythagorean symbolism of Pleiades and Sirens, see West (1967), 11–14, 15 n. 6, West (1983), 32.

[22] See LSJ s.v. *περιπολεῖν* and *περιπόλησις*. Cf. Kamerbeek (1978) ad loc.: '"*περιπόλοις*" may be regarded as adjective as well as noun ("attendants")'.

[23] Henrichs (1994–5), 77–8, (1996), 51–6. [24] Parker (2005), 350.

[25] Parker (2005), 349, 358 with further literature.

also reinforced by the choral revolutions 'all night long' in which the procession finds its culmination. Circular dance is conceived to be primordially cultic and primordially Dionysiac.

In Euripides' *Ion* the chorus expresses shame at the thought that a foreign interloper (Ion) will witness the Eleusinian Mysteries. They imagine Ion at the nocturnal procession of Iacchus/Dionysus (1074–86):

> I feel shame before the much-sung god if [Ion], present as a spectator at the festival of the twentieth by the springs of the beautiful dances (καλλιχόροισι παγαῖς), keeping the all-night vigil, will see the torch, when the starry-faced aether of Zeus has begun to dance and the moon dances and dance too the fifty daughters of Nereus on the sea and the eddies of everflowing rivers in honour of Kore and the golden crown of the reverend Mother.

As in *Antigone* the chorus draws a close analogy between the dance of the stars and the mythical dance of Nereids. Nereids are the archetypal Dionysiac dancers of myth, as Thyiads are of cult. They are invariably portrayed in art and literature as dancing in circles, and that is why they are said here to dance 'on eddies'.[26] Notwithstanding the slight difference in the astrological and choral personnel, the reference is to the same cultic performance as in *Antigone* (note 'at the festival of the twentieth'). The language of song, 'by the springs of the beautiful dances (καλλιχόροισι παγαῖς)', more specifically localizes the dance of the projected chorus at the Callichoron Well ('Well of the Beautiful Dance'), also called 'Parthenion' ('Well of the Maidens'), just outside the precinct at Eleusis.[27] It is at this well, where Demeter ended her wanderings, that the Iacchus procession also culminates in dances performed by maidens in commemoration of the fact that 'there the women of Eleusis first organized a chorus and sang to the goddess'.[28]

The dances at the Callichoron Well are also the subject of a choral projection in the wildly 'dithyrambic' third stasimon of Euripides' *Helen*, though there it is Graces and Muses who dance, not Thyiads or Nereids. The second parodos of Aristophanes' *Frogs* also refers to the same procession and dance.[29] The chorus of initiates process into the theatre, carrying torches, and invoking Iacchus.[30] Once arrived, the chorus leader (identified by Radermacher as the Dadouchos) exhorts the chorus to 'dance in the circular motion sacred to the goddess . . . and I, carrying a holy light, will dance with the girls and

[26] Nereids: Csapo (2003). Eddies: see also Csapo (1999–2000), 422–4.

[27] Thematic use of the adjective καλλίχορος in choral projection: Henrichs (1996), 51–2.

[28] *h.Cer.* 99, 270–2, 292–3; Paus. 1.38.6 (quotation); Apollod. 1.5.1; Callim. *Dem.* 6.15, fr. 611; Nic. *Ther.* 484–7; Mylonas (1961), 73; Graf (1974), 131; Richardson (1974), 362–3; Clinton (1992), 28.

[29] Graf (1974), 40–50.

[30] Dover (1993*a*), 59–60, (1993*b*), 179–83.

women, where they hold the all-night celebration for the goddess'.[31] There should be no doubt about the identity of the all-night celebration: the chorus follows with a song that includes the directions 'Let us go to the flowery meadow where roses abound, celebrating in our way the most Callichoron-like dance which the blessed Muses assemble' (447–53).[32]

I see two possible reasons for the relative frequency with which the dance at the Callichoron well is invoked in dramatic odes. First that the Eleusinian dances were the most widely known still primordially cultic choral dance in Athens. The dance at the Callichoron well was not the only choral dance at Eleusis. The actual initiation dance, or thronismos, seems also to have been choral, and incidentally round.[33] But the Iacchus procession and the dance at the Callichoron were the only Eleusinian rites that were sufficiently public (which is why *Ion*'s chorus may be ashamed that Ion will 'be present as a spectator') to be mentioned (and indeed imitated—see below) in a theatrical performance without risk of prosecution for revealing the mysteries.[34] The second reason for the choice of this particular dance for choral projection is its connection with Dionysus: not only is it simple, 'round' and primitive as primordial Dionysiac dance was imagined to be, but it was in fact 'Dionysiac' because of the well-established syncretism of Dionysus and Iacchus.[35]

The scholiast to Sophocles' *Antigone* 1146 (= Eustath. *Comm. in Il.* vol. 2, p. 9 van der Valk) reports that Dionysus was called 'etherial' (*αἰθέριος*) and called 'chorus leader of the stars in accordance with some doctrine of the mysteries'. If this was just a good guess, there is evidence enough to show that it was correct. For the particular mysteries in question one does not need to look beyond Eleusis or really to choose between Eleusinian and Orphic/Bacchic sources. To the poetic imagination, at least, Dionysus' aetherial and astral associations were shared by both. The chorus of initiates in Aristophanes' *Frogs* address the god as 'lightbringing star of the nocturnal rite' (343). Eumolpus in the *Bacchica* is said to have called Dionysus 'star-shiner' and 'fiery-faced' amidst beams of light (ap. D.S. 1.11: *ἀστροφαῆ Διόνυσον ἐν ἀκτίνεσσιν πυρωπόν*). Philodamus of Scarphea, in his paian to Dionysus, asks the god to reveal his 'starry form' (21 Powell *ἀστε[ρόεν δ|έμας*). Pindar's reference to Dionysus as 'pure light of the harvest' probably

[31] Ar. *Frogs* 440–7. The phrase *χωρεῖτέ νυν ἱερὸν ἀνὰ κύκλον θεᾶς* is usually translated as refering to a circular place, but *ἀνὰ κύκλον* is choreographic language used of circular dance: Ar. *Birds* 1379 [not tmesis]; Oppian *Hal.* 3.250; cf. Simon. fr. 148.9 B; Ar. *Thes.* 968. If the 'circular place' meant precinct, it would be redundant with what follows, and if it meant some other unspecified dancing place, it would be contradictory.

[32] Lada-Richards (1999), 100.

[33] See esp. Dio, *Or.* 12.33–5 for Eleusinian *thronismos*; Pl. *Euthyd.* 277d (Korybantic thronismos); *Hymn. Orph.* 7.4 Quandt. Further Burkert (1987), 90 n. 3.

[34] Graf (1974), 50. [35] Graf (1974), 51–8.

has an astrological significance (fr. 153) as does his description of Ploutos, the divine child of Demeter, early identified with Iacchos /Dionysus, as a 'brilliant star' (*O.* 2.53).[36]

This astral imagery Dionysus shares with his worshipper. This, at any rate, is what *Antigone*'s chorus would seem to imply: the reference to Dionysus as 'chorus-leader' of the stars likens Dionysus' dancing worshippers, not Dionysus, to the stars. Menander Rhetor ascribes the notion that Dionysus was a 'leader of the stars' to the Chaldeans, but in a context that suggests 'leader', *hêgemôn*, must be taken in its choral meaning.[37] Somewhat closer to Eleusis are the allegorical explanations of the third-century BC Stoic Cleanthes who attempted a general explanation of the rites at Eleusis entirely in cosmological terms calling the sun 'dadouchos' and the cosmos 'initiates' and those possessed of the divine 'initiands'. He also 'called the gods *mystika schêmata* (?initiatory dance figures) and holy appellations', apparently in a general attempt to link cosmology, theology, dance, and mystery ritual into a single universal system, which included a typically mystic (see below) etymology of Dionysus from διανύσαι 'to finish one's course', because 'he completed a daily run in the sky from the rising to the setting day and night', indicating that Cleanthes had already also equated Dionysus (along with Apollo) with the sun.[38] Cleanthes' allegorization was not unique. Dio, as we saw, directly compared cosmic dance with Eleusinian ritual (*or.* 12.33–4); Porphyry had cosmological interpretations of a different set of Eleusinian cult officials, claiming (ap. Euseb. *Prep. Evang.* 3.12.4) that the hierophant represented the demiurge, the daduch the sun, the altar priest the moon, and the Hierokeryx Hermes.

This strain of mystic thought seems to posit not only a link between the dance of the heavenly spheres and the dance of mystic initiation, but also between the celestial dance and the cycle of life and death. The initiate of one of the gold leaves claims to have 'flown free of the grievous, wearisome cycle and embarked upon the much-desired garland with nimble feet' using what appears to be a metaphor for round dance, 'the garland', that is repeatedly found in Euripidean verse.[39] It is at any rate on descent or rebirth from the stars that the initiates of the Orphic gold leaves insist when they describe themselves as children of Earth and of 'Starry Sky', or (as in the case of the

[36] Cf. Seaford (1981), 256 n. 46. Note also the equation of Dionysus with *aither* in E. *Ba.* 292–3 with Seaford (1996), 176, 202.

[37] Menander Rhet. *Peri epideiktikon* 446 Russell and Wilson.

[38] Cleanthes *SVF* 1.123 fr. 538; Cleanthes ap. Macrob. *Sat.* 1.18; cf. Burkert (1983), 288, (1987), 90; Parker (2005), 353.

[39] DK 1 B 18–69 = *PEG* 2.2 F 488.3–6. For the garland metaphor: Csapo (1999–2000), 422.

garland dancer) as blasted by the 'star-flinger' with (or of) lightning, and, in one case the initiate lays claim to the name 'Starry'.[40] An 'Orphic' third-century BC tombstone claims that the deceased is 'descended from immortal fire' and lives 'elevated by his father among the heavenly stars'.[41]

We do not know (and for our purposes perhaps need not know) just how complicit Eleusinian cult was with the cosmological imagery of poets or the cosmological allegories of philosophers. It is however noteworthy that the only extant hymn known to have been performed in an ancient procession to Eleusis reproduces precisely this image of worshippers dancing like stars around Dionysus. The circumstances were extraordinary, but for that very reason it was desirable for the imagery of the hymn to match cultic requirements as closely as possible. For over sixteen years Athens had responded favourably to Demetrius the Besieger's attempt to impose himself as a 'New Dionysus'.[42] His reconquest of Athens seems to have coincided with the Dionysia of 295 BC, a happy coincidence, perhaps, which stimulated a calendrical reform beginning the new year with the Dionysia, but also merging the Dionysia with a new festival, the Demetria, designed to commemorate his epiphany. Already publicly acknowledged as a 'saviour' god, Demetrius in 291 or 290 BC decided to press his connection to the supreme mysteries by 'staging' a return to Athens (from Corcyra) to coincide with the procession to Eleusis.[43] In anticipation of his bodily appearance at the event, it was decreed 'that Demetrius was to be received, whenever he came, with the honours due to Demeter and Dionysus'.[44] Democharis reports that (*FGrH* 75 F 2):

> . . . the Athenians received him not only with incense, garlands, and libations of wine, but went to meet him with processional choruses and ithyphallic hymns accompanied by dance and song. And coming to a halt before him (ἐφιστάμενοι) among the crowds (?) they danced and sang. And they sang to him that he was the only true god . . . etc.

Duris of Samos preserves part of the ithyphallic hymn sung in Demetrius' honour on this occasion of which I cite only the 'epiphany':[45]

[40] *PEG* 202 F 474.10, 475.12, 476.6, 477.8–9, 478.3, 479.3, 480.3, 481.3, 482.3, 483.3, 484.3, 484a.3, 488.4, 489.4, 490.5.

[41] *SEG* 28 no. 528 = *PEG* 2.1 466 T.

[42] Scott (1928), 222–37; Ehrenberg (1946), 179–98; Tondriau (1949); Chaniotis (1997), 241–2; Thonemann (2005).

[43] For Demetrius as 'Saviour': Plut. *Demetr.* 10, cf. 13; *Dem and Ant.* 3, cf. *Ant.* 24.3–4; Vell. Pat. 2.82.4; Chaniotis (1997), 241–2. For Demetrius and the mysteries: Plut. *Demetr.* 26; Antiphanes, *Twin*, *PCG*, F 81. For the chronology of Demetrius' appearance, see: Wehrli (1968), 178; Habicht (1979), 34–44; Green (1990), 127.

[44] Plut. *Demetr.* 12.1; Thonemann (2005), 79.

[45] *FGrH* 76 F 13. On the epiphanic language see: Weinreich (1926), 647; Scott (1928), 230–1; Ehrenberg (1946), 192; Slater (1988).

> For the hour has brought here together
> Demeter and Demetrius;
> She comes to celebrate the holy mysteries of the Maiden;
> And he is present, beautiful and laughing,
> Radiant with joy as the god should be.
> Something awesome is being revealed: all his friends circle him
> (πάντες κύκλῳ),
> He stands in the middle,
> And the friends are just like stars
> And he is the Sun . . .

We find the chorus of 'friends' (probably the 'Athenians') 'danced and sang', presumably in a circle around Demetrius/Dionysus, likening itself to stars and Demetrius to the sun. The equation of Dionysus with the sun, common in the literature and iconography of the mysteries in Hellenistic times,[46] is here clearly attested for the first time,[47] though unlikely to have been the invention of Hermocles, the poet of the ithyphallic hymn, and it soon appears in the mystic equations of Cleanthes (above). For the astral imagery, at any rate, Hermocles' immediate source would appear to be Demetrius himself. Demetrius' shield (inscribed 'of King Demetrius') has recently been unearthed at Dion: its front is decorated with a sunburst surrounded by seven stars. From literary sources, moreover, we learn that Demetrius urged his identification with Dionysus by wearing a kind of costume that must already have been common in mystic initiation,[48] chlamydes embroidered with 'an image of the kosmos and the heavenly bodies', or 'with golden stars and the animals of the zodiac'. Indeed, Demetrius' cosmological (as well as imperial) ambitions were advertised by a painting on the proskenion of the Theatre of Dionysus which showed him riding on top of the world.[49] The astral imagery would have had little point unless 'stars' and 'star-choruses' had already a well-established connection with the mystic Dionysus.

[46] See e.g. Macrob. *Sat.* 1.18; Dio Chrys. 31.570 R; *PEG* 2.1 F 305, cf. F 323, *Orph. fr.* F 236–8 K.

[47] The earliest attestation of the solar Dionysus is generally said to be Diod. 1.11.1–3, though some scholars would trace the syncretism to the fifth century: e.g. Guépin (1968), 266–79. West finds 'traces of an Orphic solar cult as early as the fifth century [BC]' ((1983), 12–13, 206 (quote) citing A. *Bassarai*; S. *TrGF* F 752, *OT* 660; Ar. *Clouds* 571–4).

[48] *Orph. fr.* F 238 K, with Eisler (1910), 106, (1925), 283. Cf. E. *Hel.* 1358–9 ('the all-dappled garments of fawn have great power') and the mystic interpretation of the spots as stars: *Orph. fr.* 238 K; cf. D.S. 1.11; Powell ad Philod. Scarph. 27–8.

[49] Duris *FGrH* 76 F 14 (cf. the sun and stars on Bacchic ceremonial robes, *Orph. fr.* F 238 K.); Plut. *Dem.* 41.

3. *PERITHOUS*

Euripides' (or Critias') *Perithous* is set in the underworld. The chorus invoke an unnamed masculine deity with the words 'you, the self-generating, you who wove the nature of all things in the aetherial *rhumbos* (*ἐν αἰθερίῳ ῥύμβῳ*), about whom dance light, about whom dance perpetually dark variegated night and the indistinguishable throng of stars' (*TrGF* 43 F 4). The chorus, residents of the underworld, are, judging from the way they speak, initiates. Snell and Kannicht guess that they are Eleusinian (*TrGF* 43 F 2: 'mystarum Eleusiniorum mortuorum (?)'). This is partly based on a reference to a *plêmochoê* which is a vessel used, according to Athenaeus (496a), on the last day of the mysteries at Eleusis. But they were right to reserve judgement: the language and ideas seem Orphic, not Eleusinian.[50]

Satyrus was not the last to suppose that the *rhumbos* draws upon materialistic Ionian speculations such as we find in Anaxagoras, Diogenes, or Anaximenes about the aetherial whorl.[51] But *rhumbos* is a most curious term for a circular motion, which is clearly what is required here. *Rhumbos* or, more usually, *rhombos*, refers to a lozenge-shaped figure, or a bullroarer, a normally lozenge-shaped instrument swung around the head on a string to produce an uncanny sound resembling thunder and favoured in initiation rites around the world. Except by analogy with the use of bullroarers, *rhombos* is an unnatural word for the movement of the heavens. It is paralleled, not in Presocratic philosophy but in the language of Euripidean choral projections. In the distinctly dithyrambic third stasimon of *Helen*, 'whirling circular aetherial vibration of the *rhombos*' (1362–5: *ῥόμβος θ' εἱλισσομένα κύκλιος ἔνοσις αἰθερία*) appears in a list of cultic accoutrements and instruments for dancers for Bromios and the *pannychides* of the Great Goddess. There is abundant evidence for the use of the bullroarer in fifth-century and later mystery rites connected with Dionysus, Cybele, but also Demeter: *Helen*'s third stasimon associates it with the rites of Bromios and the Great Mother.[52]

The apparent choice of 'doctrinally charged' language to describe the circular motions of cultic dance is one of the most typical features of Euripidean choral projection. Words of the *διν-* root ('whorl'), such as *dinê*, *dineîn*, *dineuein*, *dineumata*, are common only in two types of poetry: like references

[50] The reference to the 'self-generating' demiurge alone might suffice to make the point: see *Hymns* 12.9–10; West (1983), 198, 231.

[51] Sat. *Vit. Eur.* 37, col. 2.

[52] Dionysus: Pindar fr. 70b Maehler (dithyramb); A. *TrGF* F 57.8–9.; *AP* 6.165.5; *PEG* 2.1 F 306. Cybele: Diogenes *TrGF* 45 F 1.3; A.R. 1.1139. Demeter: Epiphanius ap. Kern (1922), 110. See esp. West (1983), 155–7. Further passages and bibliography at *PEG* 2.1 F 306.

to star choruses they are found abundantly only in the choral odes of tragedies (especially Euripidean tragedies) of the last two decades of the fifth century BC and in Orphic hymns or poetry influenced by the mysteries.[53] It seems likely that the mystic derivation of *Dionysus* from *dineuein* was already known.[54]

Less rare, but especially common in Euripidean choral projections are words of the ἑλικ- root (*helix*, *helissein*), so common that Wilamowitz declared *helissein* Euripides' *Lieblingswort*.[55] These are given added significance by the fact that *helix* also means 'ivy', the sacred, upward-spiralling plant of Dionysus. In tragedy and in poetry inspired by mystery doctrine both *din-* and *helik/s*-words frequently describe Dionysiac dance[56] and the circular movements of the heavenly bodies.[57] The use of etymology to link cult with cultic symbols and cultic symbols with cosmogony is especially characteristic of Orphic literature. The Orphic *Hymn to the Sun*, for example, offers 'fire-runner, circle-revolver driving with eddyings the path of the unbounded bullroarer' (8.7, 11 Quandt: *ῥόμβου ἀπειρεσίου δινεύμασιν οἶμον ἐλαύνων . . . πυρίδρομε, κυκλοέλικτε*).

Euripides' (or Critias') term *aitherios* also points in this direction. As we saw, the scholiast to Sophocles' *Antigone* connected the word 'with some doctrine of the mysteries'. There are various Archaic and Classical sources, literary and epigraphical (mainly tombstones), affirming that the soul rejoins the *aithêr* after separation from the body; some implying that this entails a(n evidently desirable) form of immortality.[58] In the *Chrysippos* of Euripides, for example, we are told: 'that born of earth goes back to earth, but that sprung from the aitherial seed goes back to the pole of heaven, nothing that exists dies. . .'.[59] Orphic fragments abundantly confirm a belief not only in the birth of the gods from *aithêr* but also in the derivation of the soul from *aithêr*.[60] Possibly because epitaphs often express a belief that the souls of the dead rejoin the *aithêr*, many scholars regard such notions as popular ideas, 'folk

[53] See Csapo (1999–2000), 419–24.

[54] Csapo (1999–2000), 424.

[55] Wilamowitz (1895) II 159. See Csapo (1999–2000), 419–24.

[56] *Din*-words: E. *Ion* 1084, *Phoen.* 792, *Or.* 837, 1458; Ar. *Thesm.* 122 (reading with Bentley *δινεύματα*). Cf. Opp. *H.* 673–6. *Helix*-words: Csapo (1999–2000), 422; Csapo (2003).

[57] E. *Alc.* 245, *IT* 192, *Or.* 983 (with Willink (1986) ad loc.); Ar. *Clouds* 380–1, *Birds* 697; *Orph. fr.* F 115.2, 236.1, 237.7, 238.13 K; *Hymn. Orph.* 4.4, 6.7, 7.4, 10.22, 19.10, 40.15 Quandt. Cf. Emped. DK B 115.11 and [A.] *PV* 1051 with Seaford (1986), 10–11.

[58] See the passages cited by Bernabé at *PEG* 2.1 F 436. Add Alexis *PCG* F 163; *IG* II^2 12599. Cf. Epicharm. *PCG* F 213, 254.

[59] E. *TrGF* F 839.8–11.

[60] Gods: *PEG* 2.1 F 65 (from E. *Hypsipyle*), 125, 126. Souls: *PEG* 2.1 F 436–7; West (1983), 99, 222–3.

beliefs', in Arnott's words.[61] The wide distribution of such ideas does indeed suggest that they are not (as is sometimes claimed) direct allusions to the theories of isolated philosophers like Anaximenes or Anaximander, but immediately derived from a more popular medium. It is interesting to note that the majority of the pre-Platonic references to human souls rejoining the *aithêr* come from Euripidean tragedy (where the *aithêr* is the usual 'destination of Euripides' deified mortals'[62]). For our purposes, still more interesting is the fact that the related but distinguishable notion that the souls of the dead become stars, whatever its ultimate source may be, is also present in Euripidean tragedy, and—more significantly—associated in the popular mind with dithyrambic poetry.[63] Aristophanes' *Peace* connects the notion that the souls of the dead float in the air after death with dithyrambic poets, while, through his sighting of the dithyrambic poet Ion, Trygaeus confirms the notion that after death, as 'they say', men become stars (826–41).

4. *PHAETHON* AND *ELECTRA*

A fourth tragic reference to a chorus of stars depends on a likely supplement. The parodos of Euripides' *Phaethon* (a play of *c.*420) begins: 'Dawn rides over the earth, over our heads the chorus of the Pleiades has fled' (63–6). The ode accompanies this choral projection with natural and primitive music: the nightingale sings a lament for her dead son (67–70), the drovers play their panpipes (71–2), the swan sings (73), and the winds bluster (80). Through it the imagery sustains a sinister tone. A reference to Dawn's ride makes an inauspicious overture to a day that will see Phaethon fall to his death from the Sun's chariot. The nightingale's dirge, the swan that sings only at the approach of death, even the accompaniment of wind instruments (the normal accompaniment to funereal song) and the uncontrolled bluster of wind itself, all anticipate the choral lamentation that will end the performance. In this company the Pleiades are a particularly ominous chorus to project. In myth they were maidens catasterized while performing a lament for a male relative: in Aeschylus (*TrGF* F 12) their father Atlas; in a fragment of 'Musaeus' (DK B 18) a dead brother, Hyas, whom they lament eternally along

[61] Arnott (1996), 477; Bernabé on *PEG* 2.1 F 436 'multi (non tantum Orphici) credebantur animam aetheri affinem esse'.

[62] Collard, Cropp, and Lee (1995), 191.

[63] The evidence for belief in 'astral immortality' among early Pythagoreans is doubtful: Burkert (1972), 363.

with the hemichorus of their sisters, the Hyades (the fragment is ascribed to an Eleusinian theogony, the *Eumolpia*).[64] The evocation of the Pleiades seems still more ominous when we later find that Phaethon's death was prompted by his failure to obey his father's command to 'keep directing your course towards the seven Pleiades' (*TrGF* F 779.4).

The image of the Pleiades also, however, has an auspicious side. As catasterized maidens the chorus partakes of a form of astral immortality, and the same may be true of Phaethon. Plutarch cites from Euripides two trimeters that with reason are frequently assigned to this play: 'he whose flesh just now was in the bloom of youth was quenched like a falling star and he released his soul into the *aithêr*'.[65] In any case a fragment of the play describes Phaethon enjoying an afterlife in an Elysium-like environment.[66] Moreover, Euripides mentions the Hyades in the *Phaethon*, probably in the messenger speech.[67] The context is unfortunately lost. Perhaps they are mentioned as another constellation, related to the Pleiades, as in Musaeus, and so, as a catasterized maiden chorus, entirely relevant to the train of imagery we have been following.

There is a more interesting possibility. Pherecydes (c.465) identified the Hyades as nurses of the newborn Dionysus (fr. 90). Robert Fowler reconstructs a mythic tradition in which the Hyades extinguish the fire in the body of the newborn Dionysus (who was still in the womb when his mother was struck by Zeus' thunderbolt) and suggests this function may be related to initiatory fire-purification rituals such as those performed at Eleusis.[68] Phaethon shares with Semele and the Titans who swallowed Dionysus (hence with Dionysus at his birth and rebirth) the distinction of having been ignited by Zeus' celestial fire. In light of Fowler's argument, we might speculate that the Hyades were mentioned in the description of the rescue and recovery of Phaethon's body. The fire is not completely extinguished, however, as the text of *Phaethon* preserves mention of an extraordinary ritual performed around the still smouldering Phaethon's body. In the guise of a marriage hymn Clymene commands the maidens to sing hymns to all the gods, especially Hestia, while dancing in a circle inside the palace and, presumably, around the hearth (a ritual much like that presupposed by Philolaus and the Pythagorean

[64] West (1983), 42–3. These epics are notoriously undatable: West guesses that the theogony was not composed until 'about the second half of the fourth century'.

[65] *TrGF* F 971 (Plut. *Mor.* 416e, 1090c); see Collard, Cropp, and Lee (1995), 197.

[66] *TrGF* F 782.; Diggle (1970), 179.

[67] *Σ* Arat. 172; Diggle (1970), 174.

[68] The discussion will be incorporated in the Commentary (vol. 2) to his *Early Greek Mythography*.

description of cosmic dance, mentioned in section 1).[69] In the hymn the chorus refer to Phaethon as 'he whom you [Aphrodite] hide in the *aithêr*'.[70]

Like the Dionysus of the mysteries, humanity too was struck by lightning at its birth insofar as it was formed from the ash of the Titans. This is presumably part of the meaning of the gold-leaves from Thurii that announce that the initiates buried with them were struck by lightning, 'tamed "by the star-flinger with lightning".'[71] Euripides' *Phaethon* alludes liberally, if somewhat remotely, to this same complex of eschatological ideas bound up with the doctrine of the fall of humanity, the cycle of rebirth, and the prospect of reunion with the divine (whether through aetherial or astral immortality).

We know that Eleusinian doctrine offered initiates a blessed afterlife. It is often claimed that this is incompatible with the doctrine of astral immortality. For our purposes it is enough to show that tragedy drew upon mystery cult, even if it collected incompatible ideas in an indiscriminate mix. But Euripides does seem to urge a specific link between astral immortality and Eleusis in the epilogue to his *Erechtheus*. Unfortunately this too survives only in tantalizing fragments. Athena announces her and Zeus' dispensation for the invaders and defenders of Athens. The souls of the daughters of Erechtheus do not go to Hades but are 'transferred to the *aithêr*' and become the 'brightness of the Hyakinthides' which later in the same speech are explicitly equated with the 'Hyades'.[72] The constellation will receive sacrifice and the Athenians must 'adorn it with the choral dances of maidens'. Athena then announces that the descendants of Eumolpus will become the hereditary hierophants of the Eleusinian mysteries. Though the papyrus here breaks down, the catasterism of the Hyades appears to be connected with the investiture of the Eumolpids. From the remainder of the speech there survive isolated but significant words like 'Demeter', 'for the Hyades', and 'of stars'.[73]

A fifth tragedy with a star chorus, also Euripidean, and also presumably from about 420, is more elusive. In the first stasimon of Euripides' *Electra* the chorus sing: 'In the centre of the shield was shining down the gleaming circle

[69] *TrGF* F 781.32–7. In an unnamed play of Euripides Earth (*Γαῖα μήτερ*) is said to be called 'Hearth' (Hestia) standing 'stable in the *aethêr*' (meaning, at the centre of the cosmos, according to Macrobius, one of the authors who cites the fragment): E. *TrGF* F 944; Macrob. *Saturn.* 1.23.8. Gaia *mêtêr* is of course the mystic Earth Mother (*Gê-mêtêr*) who is equated with 'Demeter, Rhea, Hestia, Deio' in an Orphic hymn known to the Derveni commentator and written in Attic (col. XXII). The equation of Demeter and Hestia is already attested for Eleusinian theology by Sophocles' *Triptolemos* (*TrGF* F 615). Cf. Philochorus *FGrH* 328 F 185; *PHerc.* 1428 fr. 2.21–2 (Philod. *On Piety*); Obbink (1994), 144–5; Burkert (1994), 47–8.

[70] *TrGF* F 781.21. See Diggle (1970), 155–60; Collard, Cropp, and Lee (1995), 235.

[71] *PEG* 2.2 F 448.4, 489.5, 490.5.

[72] E. *TrGF* F 370.107 with Scholiast to Aratus 172.

[73] E. *TrGF* F 370.68–108.

of the Sun upon winged horses, and the heavenly choruses of the stars (*ἄστρων τ' αἰθέριοι χοροί*), the Pleiades, the Hyades, repulsing the eyes of Hector' (464–9).

This is not the first projected chorus in the ode. The ode opens with an image of 'choruses with Nereids' and dolphins leaping to pipe music in circles around the ships taking Achilles to Troy (*χορούς μετὰ Νηρήιδων ἵν' ὁ φίλαυλος ἔπαλλε δελφὶς . . . εἱλισσόμενος*). The image, as I have argued elsewhere, evokes primordial dithyramb, but also, despite apparently bright, escapist tones, it heads a series of images with distinctly funereal associatons.[74] A brighter note, however, is struck by this image of Nereids and dolphins escorting Achilles, since it is their function in myth to guide his soul to a blessed afterlife in the White Isles. Achilles is, notably, described in this ode as 'a light for Greece' (449 *Ἑλλάδι φῶς*) using the language of hymn. In cultic poetry, light imagery is used of the divine epiphany of a saviour god,[75] and especially for epiphanies of Dionysus, whose mysteries bring ultimate salvation for the initiate.[76]

The presence of the sun and stars on Achilles' shield is, of course, inspired by their presence in the description of Achilles' shield in the *Iliad* (18.486). So, in part, is doubtless the confusion of the armour's solar and astral luminosity with the dazzling brightness of Achilles.[77] Indeed, it is likely that the language Euripides used to describe the imagery on the shield, the 'signs wrought as fears for Phrygians' (456–7 *σήματα δείματα Φρύγια τετύχθαι*) are a direct echo of the *Iliad*'s 'wrought as an evil sign' (22.30 *κακὸν δέ τε σῆμα τέτυκται*) used to describe Sirius to which Achilles is compared.[78] But though the *Iliad* places the sun, moon, Hyades, Pleiades and other constellations on Achilles' shield, there is nothing in Homer to motivate Euripides' description of the stars as choruses. Euripides' word for 'gleaming' used to describe the circle of the sun at the centre of Achilles' shield is *phaethon* and many have seen here an allusion to the myth of Phaethon.[79] The epithet is given to the sun several times in Homer and Hesiod, but is also favoured in mystic texts and above all Empedocles' description of the souls of the damned being cast from one

[74] Csapo (2003) and (forthcoming *a*).

[75] Pfister (1924), 35; Richardson (1974) ad *h.Dem.* 188–90.

[76] Dodds (1960), 213; Zeitlin (1989), 161; and, above all, Seaford (1996), 196–7, 200, 202. When light imagery is used of mortals it elevates them into the divine sphere: Slater (1988), 57–8. The light imagery is applied to Orestes later in *Electra*, when he is identified as 'a beacon for his city' (587) and the hyperbolic 'O light! O gleam of the sun drawn by four horses' appears to be addressed to him by Electra at 866. For the implicit contrast and comparison of Orestes to Achilles in the play, see Mulryne (1977), 36–8; Walsh (1977), 284; Kraus (1992).

[77] See esp. Hom. *Il.* 19.374, 19.381, 19.398, 22.25–33, 22.317–20; Hardie (1985), 12. The light imagery inspired Metrodorus to allegorize Achilles as the sun and Hector the moon (DK A 4).

[78] King (1980), 204.

[79] See Csapo (forthcoming *a*).

element into another.[80] Euripides' interest here is not only eschatological but also cosmological as comparison with *Electra*'s second stasimon shows.

Astrological imagery appears again in *Electra*'s second stasimon. The second stasimon is programmatically linked with the first, and shares something of its form and purpose.[81] Like the first stasimon it opens with a choral projection: a sacrifice accompanied by a chorus, choral song, and the music of pipes (712, 717–18). The Argives attending the sacrifice come to see 'apparitions, fears' (711, φάσματα δείματα). This is the golden lamb, which, surprisingly, Thyestes is able to produce as proof of his right to succession, but also as evidence that he seduced his brother's wife. At the sight of it Zeus 'turned around the shining paths of the stars and the light of the sun and the white face of dawn' (727–30). The second stasimon's 'apparitions, fears' (711, φάσματα δείματα) deliberately echoes the first stasimon's 'signs, fears' (456, σήματα δείματα),[82] but with the difference that the signs designed to turn the eyes of Hector here succeed in turning the heavens. In consequence of the sun's deviation there is a climatic reversal: the parts of the earth that were once lush now wither and those that were dry are drenched with rain.

Euripides relates the myth of the golden lamb to a reversal of the movements of the sun and stars. In the third stasimon of *Orestes* (998–1010) the chorus declares that the sight of the golden lamb, the adultery of Aerope, and the banquet of Thyestes (cf. 1008–9) caused Strife to change the course of the chariot of the sun 'and Zeus turned the running of the seven-wayed Pleiades in the opposite direction', which presumably means that this chorus of stars reversed its circular dance (1005–6). (In *Thyestes* Euripides turned Atreus into an astronomer who secured his kingdom by predicting the change in the course of the sun.)[83] The connection *Electra*'s second stasimon makes between the reversal of the course of the heavenly bodies and climatic change relates to a theory more fully explained by Plato. In *Timaeus* the Egyptian priests explain to Solon that periodically a *parallaxis* of the heavenly bodies affects the balance of elements on Earth, usually increasing fire, or water, and creating severe climatic changes from which Egypt, because of its unique conditions, alone is spared.[84] For this reason they alone have accurate knowledge of a destruction by fire for which the Greeks had only the story of Phaethon's ride. In *Politicus* the 'Eleatic Stranger' relates another such

[80] Emped. DK B 15.11; *PEG* 2.1 F 125; Orphic *Lithica* 90 (Abel); Manetho, *Apotelesmatica* 1.296, 1.301, 2.253, 4.36, 4.148, 4.171, 4.201, 6.39, 6.66, 6.74, 6.94, 6.122, 6.303, 6.382.

[81] Cropp (1988), 149; Csapo (forthcoming *a*).

[82] The language seems to aspire to a mystic tonality: for *phasmata* and *deimata* see Riedweg (1987), 55, 60–9. Curiously, Plato also refers to the golden lamb as a *phasma* (*Pol.* 268e)

[83] *TrGF* F 861; Strabo 1.2.15.

[84] Pl. *Tim.* 22b–23b. Cf. Hdt. 2.142.

parallaxis to the reversal of the direction of the sun and stars in consequence, as 'they say', of the dispute between Atreus and Thyestes. Plato equates these cycles of destruction to the Pythagorean theory of the World Year (cf. *Timaeus* 39d). Philolaus is said (by Aetius, DK A18) to have claimed that destruction of the world came from two sources, fire pouring from heaven and water from the moon. Cosmological interpretation of the Phaethon and Thyestes myths is also first attested in Pythagorean circles: Aristotle ascribes to Pythagoreans the belief that the 'destruction at the time of Phaethon' created the Milky Way either from the burning of one of the stars fallen from the heaven or because of a change in the orbit of the sun; Posidonius related that, among others, Oenopides (not certainly a Pythagorean) ascribed the Milky Way to the meal of Thyestes which caused the sun to change its course.[85] Euripides drew upon the cosmological interpretations of both the Phaethon and Thyestes myths.

Thus the choruses of stars in *Phaethon* and *Electra*, unlike their congeners, have no obvious connection with Eleusis or any Bacchic mysteries on a cultic level, though they do on the theological. In both plays the cosmic order, represented by the chorus of stars, is disrupted by the transgressions of mortals.

Among all the stars said to dance in the heaven it is only the Pleiades (in *Phaethon*, *Electra*, and *Orestes)* and the Hyades (in *Phaethon*, *Erechtheus*, *Electra)* that are singled out, presumably because these constellations are particularly suited for choral projection. They are choruses of maidens and their movements to the Greek imagination suggested circular dance (independently of the revolutions of all heavenly bodies). They are also located close to one another, could be imagined as hemichoruses performing together, and, in myth, they are lamenting choruses, a fact that might seem especially suited to tragic projection. They were also associated with Dionysus. Mythically, the Hyades were his nurses and companions. Astronomically, Dionysus was associated with the constellation of Taurus, on the horns, chest, back or tail of which the Pleiades and Hyades are variously located.[86]

4. NEW MUSICAL DANCE

Cultic dance was regarded as the most primitive form of dance. When Hellenistic scholars accounted for the origin of the triadic form of Greek

[85] DK 41 B 10; DK 58 B 37c. Oenopides' relation to Pythogoreanism: Burkert (1972), 322. Oenopides' possible influence on Euripides: Morrison (1970), 85–90; Willink (1986), 254–5; West (1987), 287–8; Cropp (1988), 151.

[86] Dionysus as Taurus: Gundel (1927); Hopfner (1940), 2.161.

choral dance and poetry they referred to worshippers dancing around an altar.[87] First they circle an altar in one direction; this was called a 'turning' (*strophe*). Then they circle the altar in the other direction, this was called the 'counter-turning' (*antistrophe*). Then they stood still; this was called an 'epode'. The cultic chorus circling an altar was even imagined to be the origin of the rhetorical 'period'. It was the *Urform* of all artistic forms. Seven of the eight surviving accounts go on to claim that the triadic dance structure imitated the movements of the heavenly bodies, and to specify cosmological reasons for the change in movement from clockwise to anticlockwise. They are however in serious disagreement as to precisely which dance movements correlate to which celestial revolutions. The disagreement shows that these texts do not originate with 'Ptolemy's mindless Pythagorean symbolism' as Crusius thought.[88] Mullen thought more plausibly of some 'astronomically preoccupied mystery religion' which 'exercised influence over ritual practices that shaped the choral ode in performance.'[89]

Dramatic choruses, however, were rectangular. At least such is the claim of another very different ancient scholarly tradition. It is this tradition that is accepted by modern scholarship.[90] Not without reason. The rectangular formation of the dramatic chorus is confirmed by the terminology distinguishing the positions in the rank and file and by vase paintings, both of which can be traced back to the fifth and fourth centuries.[91] (Only Triclinius on Euripides' *Hecuba* 647, who follows the astronomical tradition, claims a round dance for dramatic choruses.) There is a risk, however, that the sources for rectangular dance are extrapolating from the parodos of the drama,[92] possibly under the influence of a military model for choral dance that was current, in some circles, in antiquity (and that led Winkler to regard dramatic choral duty as a form of ephebic drill).[93] Winkler's claim, however, that 'there is no evidence that tragic choruses ever took up a circular formation' goes too far.[94]

[87] Most of the relevant texts are conveniently collected by Färber (1936), pt. 2, 14–18, translated by Mullen (1982), 225–8, and treatment by modern scholarship summarized by D'Alfonso (1994), 20.

[88] Crusius (1888), 14; cf. Reisch (1899), 2384–5. [89] Mullen (1982), 229.

[90] Pollux 4. 108–9; *Prolegomena de comoedia* Xa (Koster); Phot. s.v. *tritos aristerou*. The handbooks treat the rectangularity of the dramatic chorus as a bland truism: Pickard-Cambridge (1968), 239–42; Lonsdale (1993), 92; Calame (1997), 58. The cliché is challenged by Ferri (1932–3) and Davidson (1986).

[91] Cratinus *PCG* P 229; Arist. *Pol.* 1277^{a}12, *Met.* 1018^{b}26–9; Attic column krater in Basel (BS 415) and Attic lekythos in Munich (inv. 6025), both in Green (1991), 34–5 and pls. 6, 7b; two reliefs from the Agora (Webster and Green (1978), 118–19, AS 3–4); Pingiatoglou (1992). But see the new fragmentary scene published by Froning (2002), 72, which appears to depict a round dance.

[92] Cf. Davidson (1986), 41.

[93] Winkler (1990); for the military model, see Csapo (2004), 241–2.

[94] Winkler (1990), 50.

Since a rectangular formation is ascribed to the *dramatic* chorus generically, let us first deal with comedy. From the last quarter of the fifth century, (leaving 'projections' aside) self-referential remarks by comic choruses leave no doubt that they sometimes danced in the round. The parodos of Aristophanes' *Birds* shows a change in formation from lyrics to tetrameters. While singing a strophic, polymetric song, the chorus attack the heroes of the play by circling around them (346 *ἐπίβαλε, περί τε κύκλωσαι*), but, the moment the antistrophe ends and the trochaic tetrameters begin, the chorus is brought into hoplite formation (353 *ποῦ 'σθ' ὁ ταξίαρχος; ἐπαγέτω τὸ δεξιὸν κέρας*). In the final stasimon in *Thesmophoriazusae* the chorus of women first announce that they will dance in the manner required by the sacred mysteries of Demeter and Kore (947–8) and then describe their dance movements: 'Come, move, light on your feet, form a circle and dance hand in hand, move with the rhythm of the sacred dance' (953–6). The dance includes a change in direction. In one or both mesodes, the chorus incites itself to change the movement of the dance. In the first mesode it exhorts itself to 'begin a new task' and 'set the noble pace of the well-circled dance' (966–8).[95] This may be restarting in the same direction, but in the second mesode the chorus exhorts itself unambiguously to 'come, leap, turn in the other direction with a rhythmic foot' (985–9 *ἀλλ' εἶα, πάλλ', ἀνάστρεφ' εὐρύθμῳ ποδί*).[96] The final strophic pair is dedicated to Dionysus and ends with the familiar image of the ivy forming a circle (the 'garland') around him.

In *Thesmophoriazusae* the circular cultic dance for Demeter (and Dionysus) is naturally suited to the chorus's persona of celebrants at a festival of the goddess. Similarly in *Frogs* the chorus of Eleusinian initiates is enjoined to 'dance in a circular motion sacred to the goddess' (440–1). Indeed, Henrichs observed that 'Circular dances mentioned self-referentially by comic choruses tend to be connected with the cult of Demeter', though he is referring to choral projection as well as self-description.[97]

There is another round dance in *Thesmophoriazusae* which may draw upon

[95] This is surely what *εὐκύκλου χορείας εὐφυᾶ στῆσαι βάσιν* means. Rogers (1904) ad loc., Van Leeuwen (1904) ad loc., Sommerstein (1994), 111 and others take the words *στῆσαι βάσιν* to mean 'stop' the dance', but *ἱστάναι χορόν* means to perform a dance (e.g. E. *El.* 178, Ar. *Clouds* 271 with Dover (1968) ad loc.). Thomsen (1973), 30–2 gives full arguments for taking *ἱστάναι βάσιν* as an exhortation to recommence the circular motion; cf. Pickard-Cambridge (1968), 239; Zimmermann (1985), 194 n. 22.

[96] See LSJ s.v. *ἀναστρέφω* and *ἀναστροφή* 2 'esp. of the *reversal* of a wheeling movement'. The following line, if Bentley's emendation *τόρνευε* is correct, continues the metaphor of a wheeling movement. According to D'Alfonso (1994), 24 n. 12 and others, the verb plays on the technical choral meaning of *strephō*/*strophē*. Note that the projected dances of the New Musical monodies in E. *Tro.* 331–4 and *Phoen.* 312–17 also describe round dances with a change in direction.

[97] Henrichs (1994–5), 96 n. 38.

Eleusinian cult. When the women celebrating secret rites of Demeter receive news of a male intruder, they search him out 'in every direction' (660 πανταχῆ) dancing in a circle (662 ἀλλὰ τὴν πρώτην τρέχειν χρὴν ὡς τάχιστ' ἤδη κύκλῳ). This appears to be part of the play's extended parody of Euripides' *Telephus*. Papyrus fragments of that play partially preserve the section in which the chorus of Achaean chieftains performs a search for the Mysian intruder.[98] A similar round dance is played out in a choral search scene in *Birds* where the birds search for the divine intruder (Iris) 'everyone look, searching in a circle (κύκλῳ), as the winged sound of the eddying (δίνη) of an airborne god is nigh'.[99] In another choral search, this time in tragedy, the text explicitly reflects on the choral movement and it is circular. In Euripides' *Orestes* after Orestes and Pylades enter the palace to try to kill Helen (she gets transferred to the *aithêr*), Electra asks the chorus to watch out for the approach of Helen's rescuers: 'some of you circle about over here, others over there' (1294 ἀλλ' αἱ μὲν ἐνθάδ', αἱ δ' ἐκεῖσ' ἑλίσσετε).[100] A similar choral search in the round seems to be envisioned by the parody of New Musical monody in *Frogs*. The distraught woman, who is the notional singer, searching for a stolen cock, calls upon the Kouretes, 'children of Ida', to come to her aid and dance 'shaking your limbs and circling around the house' (1356–8 τὰ κῶλα τ' ἀμπάλλετε κυκλούμενοι τὴν οἰκίαν). The scholiast tells us that the lines spoof Euripides' *Cretans*, of which the chorus was composed of priests of Zagreus. All of the comic passages here spoof Euripides, though it may be that Aristophanes targets general trends in Euripidean choreography rather than the specific choreography of *Telephus* or *Cretans*. This pattern of circular search dances has an archetypal source, however, in cult. In the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* we are told that 'for nine days Lady Deo kept wheeling around (στρωφᾶτ') holding blazing torches in her hands' looking for her daughter Persephone (47–8). Lactantius and Apuleius specifically mention Eleusinian rights mimicking night 'searches' with torches for Persephone.[101] Riedweg is surely right to see here an allusion to a torch procession at Eleusis, possibly, I will add, connected with the round dances that mark the end of the Iacchus procession.[102]

Comedy and paratragedy give some evidence of round dancing and in most cases there is some connection with the mysteries and in many cases with New Music. If, however, one looks at choral projection as well as self-reference, Ferri (1932–3) and, more particularly, Davidson (1986) collect

[98] Eur. *TrGF* F 727a with Kannicht's comments.

[99] Ar. *Birds* 1196–8; cf. Ussher (1973), 143 on Ar. *Ec.* 488.

[100] Reading with the manuscripts and most editors. Van Gent, Willink (1986), 294 and Diggle (1994) prefer ἐκεῖσε λεύσσετε.

[101] Lact. *Div. inst.ep.* 18(23), 7; Apul. *Met.* 6.2.

[102] Riedweg (1987), 47.

several passages where tragic choruses describe the round dancing of other choruses. Though these passages do not provide specific proof that the performing chorus danced in the manner of the projected chorus, they do provide more evidence that round dance in song, if not in actual performance, was commonly invoked whenever a playwright wished to enrich his music with primitive, cultic, eschatological, and Dionysian colours. The Dionysian/Eleusinian theme of Sophocles' *Antigone* has, for example, been richly explored by Segal, Henrichs, and Seaford, with specific reference to the imagery of *Antigone* 1146–53, the passage with which we began this discussion of star choruses.[103]

But surely, given the New Music's reputation for mimetic effects, tragic choruses sometimes danced in the round when they projected choral imagery relating to round cultic dance. Elsewhere I have focused on Nereids, dolphins, and the recurrent use in New Musical odes (both in tragedy and circular chorus) of mystically tinged words like *helix/helissein*, *dinos/dineuein* (more could be done with the *rhombos* imagery) discussed above.[104] The very frequency of such words and imagery suggests that the preoccupation with cultic forms of dance extends beyond the lyrics to embrace the accompanying music and dance. (We find pointed references to *dinê* and *helissein* in the round dances of *Birds* and *Orestes* just discussed). But perhaps the best evidence that this imagery at least sometimes reflects the shape of its own performance comes from the presence of precisely these words, *helix* and *dinos* in the technical vocabulary of contemporary music and choreography. The fourth-century Hibeh sophist ridicules musicians who claim to produce melodies that move in a *helix*; the name *dinos* is multiply attested for a kind of dance associated with tragedy; and the Anonymous *On Tragedy*, who draws on a source highly critical of Euripides' and Agathon's New Musical experiments, refers to actual dance, not dance imagery, when he complains that 'excessive eddying (τὸ λίαν ἐνδινεύεσθαι) is unsuited to tragedy and unworthy of its dignity'.[105]

CONCLUSION

Modern scholars often contrast the 'circular chorus' performed at the Dionysia with drama's rectangular chorus. But the term probably emerged in

[103] Segal (1981), 180–1, 203; Henrichs (1990), 264–9; Seaford (1994*a*), 381–2; (1994*b*), 281–2; (1990), 87–8.

[104] Csapo (1999–2000), (2003).

[105] West (1992), 17; Apollophanes *PCG* F 1–2; *On Tragedy* 6, in Browning (1963).

contrast to predominantly (but not exclusively) linear processional choruses who performed in the *pompê* of the Dionysia, including those who performed cultic dithyramb.[106] Once a large theatre was built in Athens, towards the end of the sixth century BC, and choral contests were instituted, the dithyramb changed its shape, and its name, and became known officially as 'the circular chorus', though popular speech could still classify it as 'dithyramb'.

Like drama, circular choruses both absorbed the influence of other genres and developed their own conventions. Theatre audiences tolerated a more sustained, varied, and complex poetic form than could spectators at a procession. But at some point people complained that the theatrical genres had departed from their cultic roots and had 'nothing to do with Dionysus'.

New Music developed and spread from the circular chorus. It was partly a response to this perceived need to reinvigorate theatrical music with Dionysian form and content. Its remains are filled with the nostalgic imagery of cultic music and dance, especially mythically primordial music and dance. Nereids, dolphins, Kouretes, maenads, satyrs, and stars—all dancing in a circle. In the fifth century 'circular dance' came increasingly to be figured as the original form of all dance. This was not pure fabrication (even processional choruses seem to have ended with a dance around an altar or in a sanctuary, and in the Athenian *pompê* processions halted and performed in the Agora at the Altar of the Twelve Gods),[107] but it was in any case a convenient representation of musical history for musical genres that were now only performed in a theatre orchestra: namely drama and 'circular choruses'.

Both the theory of 'music cosmology' and the theory of 'astral immortality' are deeply rooted in Greek thought and seem ultimately to come from the Near East.[108] But it was not until the second half of the fifth century and especially the last quarter that the star chorus begins to appear with any frequency in Greek poetry. In the last decades of the fifth century we find recurrent use of the image in music, and all in the choral odes of Attic tragedy. In these odes the influence of Eleusinian mystery cult is explicit and the influence of Dionysian mystery cult palpable. In Attica the Euneidae probably produced the crucial link: they were a resident musical family that had connections with Orphism, with Eleusis and with the theatre (through Dionysus Melpomenos).[109] *Hypsipyle*, perhaps Euripides' most New Musical of plays, has Orpheus himself teach the founder of the clan, Euneus 'the music of the Asian kithara', and, in the all but lost epilogue, Dionysus 'the Singer' himself appears, doubtless to send Euneus to Athens to found his priesthood.

[106] See D'Angour (1997), Csapo and Miller (2007*a*), and Csapo (forthcoming *b*).

[107] Was this the site of Pindar's dithyramb 'For the Athenians' and if so was it performed, like a traditional cultic dithyramb, at the *pompê*?

[108] Franklin (2006*a*); Burkert (1972), 350–68.

[109] See Burkert (1994).

The impact of mystery cult on dithyramb is abundantly clear from the time of Pindar, whose dithyrambs are filled with Eleusinian and Orphic language, imagery, and ideas.[110] For dithyrambic poets mystery cult had a special appeal from the beginning, both for the importance it accorded music and dance, and for the authentically cultic and Dionysian quality of its music and dance.[111] Poets of circular choruses found an origin for the shape of their art in the dances of the mysteries (and liberally projected it back upon the dithyramb's prehistory). By the 420s dithyrambic poets were identified as primary propagators of the doctrine of astral immortality (see above) and the dithyrambic poet Aristagoras was prosecuted for 'dancing out the mysteries'.[112]

Tragedy developed an interest in round dance under the influence of dithyramb and for the same reason. Euripides in particular was prone to project cultic choruses, particularly cultic choruses of a Dionysian flavour, and most particularly the mythic archetypes of Dionysian cultic choruses. Among the latter, star choruses are supreme, because most mystical and most archetypal. According to a mystery doctrine cited by Pseudo-Lucian, but implicit already (as we have seen) in the Pythagorean/Platonic literature, the stars formed the first chorus and it was from them that gods and men learned the rhythm and harmony of music and dance.[113] Indeed, given Plato's reference to the gods as *epoptai* of the dance of the stars, it is not unlikely that Orphic myth had already established the first human imitation of the dance of the stars as the first mythical initiation, though the myth is not fully preserved until Pseudo-Lucian. Rhea ordered the Phrygian Corybantes and the Cretan Kuretes to imitate the cosmic dance, and 'she profited greatly from their skill, since they saved Zeus for her by dancing around him in a circle'.

[110] See, above all, Lavecchia (2000), with supplements by Wilson (2002) on *kanōn* and *kallikhoros* in fr. 70b.24–5.

[111] For the importance of music in mystery cult, see Hardie (2004).

[112] Σ^{EV}Ar. *Clouds* 830. Cf. Alciphr. 3.72; Arr. *Epict.* 3.21.16; Luc. *De salt.* 15, *Pisc.* 38; Anon. Oxy. 411.25; Ach. Tat. 4.8.

[113] Luc. *De salt.* 7; cf. Liban. *Or.* 64.12.

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